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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2007

In Today's Papers

Negroponte: The PKK Threatens Security
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Referans, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte, in a news conference Wednesday following his meeting with Kurdish regional administration PM Nechirvan Barzani, said Turkey, the US and Iraq share the same position regarding PKK presence in northern Iraq. "The PKK is threatening security," he noted, and a mechanism between Turkey and the US would "resolve the problem." Barzani said that the PKK is "a common problem," stressing the Iraqi Kurdish administration's response against the PKK. "More checkpoints have been established in border areas and security measures have been enhanced," he said. The economic-political daily Referans says in a news commentary, the US is pursuing a plan to block PKK operations, force the organization into a ceasefire and liquidate it. The plan will progress parallel to efforts toward peace between Israel and Palestine. President Bush wants to resolve all problems in the region before the end of his mandate, according to Referans.

Germany Extradites 2 PKK Members to Turkey, Wants al-Qaeda Suspect in Return
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report Germany has extradited two PKK members sought by Turkey. In return, Germany asks for the handover of a German citizen, Atilla Selek, who is being held in Turkey for suspected links to al-Qaeda. The Turkish Justice Ministry stated that PKK members Mehmet Iltas and Mehmet Esref Kizilay - both wanted by Interpol - were transferred to prisons in Diyarbakir and Ankara, respectively. Iltas is wanted for attacks on a police station and a minivan in 1991 in which eight people were killed. Kizilay is charged with killing a policeman in 1991. Atilla Selek was captured in Konya on November 7 and is accused of playing a key role in a botched plot to attack Ramstein Airbase and Frankfurt Airport in December 2006.

FBI-Turkish Police to Set up anti-Terror Database
Islamist-oriented Zaman reports on a proposal from the FBI which

includes the establishment of a "terror intelligence pool" between the FBI and the Turkish police. According to the draft, Turkey and the US will set up a joint database containing information about terror organizations such as the PKK, Hizbullah and al-Qaeda. Turkish police will consult the Turkish General Staff (TGS), the National Intelligence Service (MIT) and the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) before making a decision about the proposal. US Ambassador Wilson is to meet Interior Minister Besir Atalay next week in order to convince Atalay of the heavy blow this partnership could make on terror networks. Turkish security sources have found the common database very important in the fight against terror in the two countries, says Zaman.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

US Ambassador: "We are not interfering with Turkey, we are not stalling, we are serious"

Murat Yetkin wrote in the liberal Radikal (11/30): "US Ambassador Ross Wilson said that the goal of a recent breakfast meeting with a group of politicians and businessmen was to understand the latest developments in the southeastern region of Turkey. His intentions were not to interfere with Turkey's domestic affairs. Responding to Radikal's questions, Ambassador Wilson said "our aim regarding the PKK issue is to continue joint efforts against the PKK as President Bush and PM Erdogan agreed on during their last meeting. This cooperation continues seriously and this cooperation is definitely not a stalling tactic. Effective intelligence sharing has already started and Turkish officials will decide on how to use this intelligence". When he was asked why DTP deputies were not invited to the breakfast, Ambassador Wilson said "the DTP must distance itself from the PKK." The Ambassador added that "meetings always take place between diplomats and politicians. I have such political

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and social meetings almost every day. Turkish diplomats also attend these kinds of meetings at their relevant posts in different countries. Congressman Shays has been in Turkey several times and closely follows developments in Turkey. Because of the latest developments, he wanted to go to Diyarbakir and the border region this time. In order to get more information about the situation in the region, he wanted to meet with people from different circles. He had meetings with diplomats and the military. That is why we invited deputies and businessmen from Diyarbakir and its region for breakfast. This was a very useful meeting.

We are aware that our duty is a 'joint struggle' against the PKK, as PM Erdogan and President Bush discussed in Washington. We are not trying to stall. Everyone will see how serious we are on the PKK issue, but I cannot give a timeline." On the cooperation between Iraq, US and Turkey, Ambassador Wilson said "the cooperation is working well. We respect FM Babacan's criticism on Iraq, but we have noticed certain steps Iraqi officials have taken. They set check points at the border to prevent PKK infiltrating into Turkey and some other precautions I can't mention. The Ambassador added that effective intelligence sharing has begun between the US and Turkey, however, he could not comment on whether any concrete results came out of this. The Ambassador ended his remarks by saying "We do not interfere with Turkey's domestic affairs, we are trying to help Turkey in its fight against terrorism, we are not wasting Turkey's time, and we are very serious."

Wilson: Our Target is PKK

Semih Idiz wrote in the mainstream Milliyet (11/30): "Ambassador Wilson talked about the recent breakfast: "diplomats talk to as many host-country citizens as possible in order to get accurate information on that country. And that was exactly what we did on Tuesday morning. I was sorry to see that the breakfast was politicized. We never host events based on ethnic identities." Ambassador Wilson said that he had to cancel the lunch he was supposed to host yesterday to avoid further speculation. When asked whether or not the Embassy imposed an embargo on the DTP, Ambassador Wilson said that "the Embassy always meets with selected politicians and legal political parties, including the DTP. But, whenever we meet with them we emphasize that they should distance themselves from the PKK." Ambassador Wilson added that "at the November 5 meeting we declared the PKK a common enemy of Turkey and the US.

Our target is the PKK and our goal is to end the PKK violence."

TV Highlights
NTV

Domestic News

- An "Atlasjet" plane carrying 56 people crashed near the Mediterranean province of Isparta in the early morning hours on Friday, killing all onboard. The plane was en route from Istanbul to Isparta.
- A controversial bill regulating the appointments of new judges and prosecutors will be debated in the parliament Friday.
- In response to a parliamentary inquiry about the absence of Turkey in a Euro coin map, Foreign Minister Ali Babacan said the Turkish government, not being part of the EU's decision making mechanisms, has not been able to influence the decision.
- The strike of Turk Telekom workers has ended. Losses caused by sabotages during the strike are estimated to amount to 100 million Turkish Lira. Transport Minister Binali Yildirim has intervened to end the long-running strike, offering 200 Lira bonuses for each worker.

International News

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- Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said the Annapolis peace conference put prospects for an independent Palestinian State "back on track."
 - Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in a newspaper interview Thursday that failure to negotiate a two-state solution with the Palestinians could threaten Israel's long-term survival.
 - As President Sarkozy prepares to visit Algeria, the influential National Organization of Fighters, which represents veterans of the 1954-62 independence war against France, has asked Paris to apologize for the killings during its 132 years of colonial rule.
 - Iran plans to launch a crackdown on rap music, complaining about the "obscene" language used in the songs, the state IRNA news agency reported.
- WILSON